

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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CONTENTS OF NO. 12.

GOD SPEED THE RIGHT	133
"STAND THEREFORE!"	133
THE STILL HOUR	135
THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB	135
THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL:—	
THE TEASING BROTHER	137
NATURAL HISTORY:—	
THE BRITISH N. P. S.	138
CHILDREN'S CLASSICS:—	
RED SNOW	139
FRIENDSHIP WITH A BIRD	142
WHAT DO THE BIRDS SING?	142
THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN	143
THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE	144
IMPORTANT NOTICES	144

GOD SPEED THE RIGHT.

Now to heaven our prayer ascending,
God speed the right;
In a noble cause contending,
God speed the right.
Be our zeal in heaven recorded,
With success on earth rewarded,
God speed the right.
Be that prayer again repeated,
God speed the right;
Ne'er despairing, though defeated,
God speed the right.
Like the great and good in story,
If we fail, we fail with glory,
God speed the right.
Patient, firm, and persevering,
God speed the right;
Ne'er th' event nor danger fearing,
God speed the right.
Pains, nor toils, nor trials heeding,
And in heaven's good time succeeding,
God speed the right.
Still our onward course pursuing,
God speed the right;
Every foe at length subduing,
God speed the right.
Truth our cause, whate'er delay it,
There's no power on earth can stay it,
God speed the right.

—*W. E. Hickson.*

"STAND THEREFORE"!

EPHESIANS VI. 14.

A soldier, simply standing at his post, that was what Paul had seen many a time in Rome, and it suggested one of the very noblest passages he ever wrote. A soldier, with his brazen helmet, and his breastplate, and his girdle with the short sharp sword in it, and his sandals laced about his feet, and his great shield by his side,—all helping Paul to some added touch of lifelikeness in that "whole armour of God" which he would have Christ's people put on. But, in all that passage, the two most suggestive words to me are just those two that I have given you,—*"Stand therefore!"*

There is a great deal of life in which about all there is to do is—to stand. We can *do* much; we have a good deal of power in this nature of ours; Christianity is certainly no religion of passiveness, or fatalistic keeping still and letting events have it all their own way. But we cannot do all; the final working out of destiny does not rest with us, and work and fight and wrestle as we will, we come at times to places where all we can do, is, to stand.

When disappointment has come, and it seems as if all that our joy or hope were founded on had vanished; or when the whirl of passion and temptation is raging about us or within us, till we can hardly keep our feet, and feel ready to be swept away,—then, the one thing needful is, to be able to stand. To stand, indeed,—something more than mere waiting: some people are motionless enough in these emergencies, but it is the motionlessness of paralysed will—unable to do anything—merely cowering down beneath the cloud or the blow. But it is something stronger that Paul calls us to: *"stand therefore,"*—a strong, manful attitude of soul, waiting and watching, not dismayed, not believing that the great God has lost his hold of things; feeling like David, *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."* Ah, a strong, beautiful thing, then, is simple standing.

But if standing is often the only thing to be done, it is often very hard to do. Sometimes and to some people it is the very hardest

thing. Some noble natures can do almost anything in the way of action, but find it very hard to stand.

And if it is so hard even to those stronger natures, what must it be to the rank and file of men? There is no element in the world's busy life that so touches me as that of the patient standing-fast—steadfastness—of men, in the midst of toils and cares and sufferings and sore weariness. I love all *deeds* of heroism, every noble act that comes to us from mine, or battlefield, or shipwreck. These are what stir the blood in youth, and I hope none of us ever get too old to feel our pulses quickened by them. But I think that as we do grow older—I know I feel it so—it is the element of endurance, manful, patient standing that takes most hold of us. And indeed it is the hardest. It is not the charging that tries the soldier most, but the standing under fire, or the trench—or outpost-duty exposed to unknown peril in one fixed place; or, lying wounded the long night through upon the field. And yet, what, after all, are these exceptional heroisms to that heroism of standing which is involved in the common battle of the work-a-day world? The world rather distrusts the men who are chiefly remarkable for their pace; they want the quality of life which can not only do, and go, but—*stand*.

You cannot turn in any direction, but a moment's thought brings you testimony to the value of this power of standing. It robs calamities of half their terrors simply to stand and face them. Half the terrors of life are mere uncertain shapes, which a good steady look perceives to be not the threatening ghosts they seemed, but mere, dim, fantastic shapes of rock or tree. Even when the danger is real, stand and face it, and you will often disarm it.

And how this quiet standing communicates its calmness to others. On a panic,—such panics in crowded buildings, as happen from time to time,—how a few, standing, coolly and fearlessly, may altogether stem the fatal rush. Sometimes such simple standing touches the sublimest height of heroism.

What a priceless boon to a city or a state, then, are a few cool, steadfast men, who will not be carried away, who can resist the popular feeling, who can look the situation quietly over, and say the word that is needed to prevent things from a rush of folly and disaster. And that is true in public life all through—not merely in times of special excitement. We want, most of all, steadfast men at the head of the city and at the head of the nation, men who have principle, and who can stand, and stand under fire.

And so in this religious side of life. In everything, from great religious movements to the personal soul-life of the individual, the supreme test is in the standing. There is almost a new Reformation needed to-day, to bring again the Churches to that beautiful simplicity in which Jesus Christ went about preaching his own Gospel. Yet still, in all the progress that is needed, the real object of going-forward is to find some better place to *stand and live*. And it is in this—in something deeper-in than mere reform of opinions—in the quiet building up of personal Christian life, that is the real fruit of Progress. The test is, in standing; not the mere faith which can rush forward to the attack of error, or follow some great attraction of popular leadership, but the faith which in the strain and worry and temptation of common life can stand, and do its duty, and maintain its principle,—and stand, whoever comes, whoever goes, and “having done all stand.”

What can most help us, thus to stand,—help us to this steadfastness of heart and life? I think it is most of all this old Christian faith in the living God, that can do this, or at least do it in the finest and sweetest fashion. This is not only strength for the strong, but for the weak. It takes a pretty strong nature to be a Stoic; but the weakest who could not get up any strength in self may be strong in God. That is what the weakest often did in the old martyr-times and have done all through the ages. It is the difference between clenching one's own fist, and taking hold of the invisible Hand. And it is for all of us weak ones. Here, Lord, Thou art, and with Thee here, we stand. “Here, in this burden which is almost more than I can bear, and which I am tempted to throw off, and run away from,—Thou, dear God, art with me, and I must keep on bearing it.” “Here in this period which looks like death itself, Thou still art with me; and with Thee there is no real death, but only greater life.” There is the true strength in which to stand—not in self but in God.

“When I am feeble as a child,

And flesh and heart give way,—

Then on Thy everlasting strength,

With passive trust, I stay;

And the rough wind becomes a song,

And darkness shines like day.”

—Brooke Herford.

It is one sign of the tendency of human nature to goodness, that it grows good under a thousand bad influences.—*Channing*.

THE STILL HOUR.

'Tis not this fleshly robe alone
 Shall link us, Lord, to thee;
 Not always in the tear and groan
 Shall the dear kindred be.

Thou to our woe who down didst come,
 Who one with us wouldst be,
 Wilt lift us to thy heavenly home,
 Wilt make us one with thee.

Our earthly garments thou hast worn,
 And we thy robes shall wear;
 Our mortal burdens thou hast borne,
 And we thy bliss may bear!

O mighty grace, our life to live,
 To make our earth divine!
 O mighty grace, thy heaven to give,
 And lift our life to thine!

Oh, strange the gifts, and marvellous,
 By thee received and given!
 Thou tookest woe and death from us,
 And we receive thy heaven.

—Thomas H. Gill.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

Omaha Branch of Cheerful Letter Exchange offers the following books. Apply to Miss Harriet E. Johnson, 4911 Chicago Street, Omaha, Nebraska. "The Greek Gospel, An Interpretation of the Coming Faith," Edward P. Usher; "Speaking Days," Sermons preached at Essex Church; "Seven Churches," A series of Sermons by Rev. James Chalmers; "God in His World," An Interpretation; "God and the Soul," Richard A. Armstrong; "God's Education of Man," William De Witt Hyde; "God's Failures," J. S. Fletcher; "The Revolutionary Functions of the Modern Church," John Haynes Holmes; "The Map of Life," William E. H. Lecky; "Immortality and Other Essays," Charles Carroll Everett; "The Christian Philosophy of Life," Samuel P.

Leeds; "Some Ethical Phases of the Labor Question," Wright; "Social Forces," Edward T. Devine; "Through Man to God," George A. Gordon; "Routine and Ideals," LeBaron Russell Briggs; "The Preacher and Pastor," Fénelon and others; "Lights and Shadows of Mormonism," J. F. Gibbs; "The Temperance Movement," Blair; "Edward Lincoln Atkinson," Charles Lewis Slattery.

The following books from the library of the late Rev. Francis Bickford Hornbrooke, D.D., have been generously given by his widow, Mrs. Hornbrooke, and are offered only to ministers. Address Miss Eleanor Clarke, 36 Lancaster Street, Cambridge, Mass. "Sermons on St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians," Rev. F. W. Robertson, M.A.; "Sermons by Rev. F. W. Robertson, M.A." (deceased); "Lectures and Addresses by F. W. Robertson, M.A." (deceased); "Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson, M.A." (2 vols.), Stopford A. Brooke, M.A. (2d volume only); "Education of the Human Race," Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (translated by F. W. Robertson, M.A.); "Isaiah, His Life and Times," Rev. Canon S. R. Driver, M.A.; "The Epistles of Paul in Modern English," George Barker Stevens, Ph.D., D.D.; "Grammar of Assent," Newman; "Belief in God," Jacob Gould Schurman; "The Republic of God," Elisha Mulford, LL.D.; "A Retrospect of the Religious Life of England," John James Tayler, B.A.; "Institutes of Metaphysics," James F. Ferrier, A.B.; "The Gospel of Paul," C. C. Everett; "Catholicity, in its relationship to Protestantism and Romanism," Rev. F. C. Ewer, S.T.D.; "Memorials of Christian Life," Augustus Neander (translated by J. E. Ryland); "Aspects of Theism," William Knight, LL.D.; "Philosophy of Religion," John Caird, D.D.; "Man's Knowledge of God," Richard Acland Armstrong, B.A.; "The Basis of Religion," Professor Momerie; "Theologia Germanica" (translated by Susanna Winkwarth); "The Canon of the Bible," Samuel Davidson, D.D.; "Cicero de Officiis" (translated by Rev. Andrew P. Peabody, D.D.); "The Cambridge Platform of Church Discipline," Nathaniel Emmons, D.D.; "Prayers, with a Discourse on Prayer," George Dawson, M.A.

REQUESTS.

1. I should appreciate any good magazine, especially the *Needlecraft*; also scraps for patchwork. I thank the Cheerful Letter friends who have sent me reading in the past. I live in the country with my father and mother and am lonely sometimes. Address Miss Roxie Little, Oakboro, North Carolina.

2. I am a girl thirteen years old and would like to receive some good reading. I live in the country. I should like to correspond with some of the girls of my age. Address Miss Ethel Bower, Floyd, Virginia, Route 4, Box 9.

3. I thank you one and all for the literature sent me while I taught at Copper Hill. It was a remote neighborhood and miles from any library; so the children enjoyed with me the stories. Some of the books in coming from the railroad had gotten wet and the name and address was lost. I hope the sender will accept this as thanks. My address from now till October will be Draper, Virginia. I should appreciate any literature sent me, also any for my little sister who is twelve years old and very fond of reading. Address Miss Kate V. Harper, Draper, Virginia.

4. Light reading is asked for by Mrs. Lillie Hale, Ferrum, Virginia.

5. I thank whoever sends me the *Cheerful Letter*, and should be glad to get any good books or magazines. My address now is Miss Florence Cooper, Unionville, Virginia, Route 2, Box 31.

6. Mary L. Trevey, Snowden, Virginia, asks for pieces for patchwork and material for fancy work or crocheting. Also will some one send the following books: "Ruby's Reward," "Grimms' Fairy Tales," copy of the *Cheerful Letter*, and any other books suitable for a girl of twelve years.

7. I should be very glad to receive some reading—books or papers—and some patchwork pieces to cheer me in my lonely hours, as I am not strong and I have never received anything from the *Cheerful Letter* friends. Address Mrs. Tempie Wright, Dodson, Virginia.

8. I am fifteen years old and live in the country. I should like to receive reading matter, especially the *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1918. For reference I give Mrs. Katie Merritt, Critz, Virginia. My address is Miss Mary Roark, Critz, Virginia.

9. Mrs. Lucy Jones, Edgewood, Virginia, would be glad to receive scraps for patchwork.

10. Mrs. Percy B. Starbird, Lisbon Falls, Maine, Box 46, R. F. D. 1, will be glad of books, which she and her neighbors greatly enjoy. Later on she sends the books to the

soldiers or to the lumber camps, so that many persons are benefited. Books by Owen Wister are particularly desired.

11. A Bible with large print is greatly desired by Miss Frances Isbell, Grandin, North Carolina.

12. Mrs. Beulah Wright, Stella, Virginia, asks for reading for herself and pictures for her two-year-old boy.

13. Miss Myrta E. Eshbaugh, Nonesta, Pennsylvania, asks especially for *Ladies' Home Journal* for 1917 and then current numbers. Also would be grateful for a book. She is a wheel-chair invalid and her mother is confined to the bed. Surely, they need our cheer.

14. It has been some time since I heard from the *Cheerful Letter* friends, so that I am writing to ask for reading suitable for my father and also for myself. My father has lost his sight. Rose Snecker, Foster Falls, Virginia.

15. Miss Marie M. Gerber, 708 West Jones Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, would greatly appreciate receiving *The Literary Digest* and *The World's Work*.

16. I thank all who sent patchwork pieces and reading the past winter. I should be glad to get some good book or magazine or papers suitable for myself and children. I have four children aged from one to nine years. Address Mrs. F. A. Austin, Marshville, North Carolina, R. F. D. 2.

17. I am very lonely and should be very glad of some reading for myself and boy aged fifteen years. Grateful for any expression of comfort. Address Mrs. J. J. Whitley, Oakboro, North Carolina, Route 2.

18. I live in the country and get very lonely at times. My husband had to register but was classed in the fourth class. We have one little babe to comfort our home; but I should like to receive good reading matter. Address Mrs. Rena Bunch, Athens, Tennessee, see, Route 8.

19. All my children are married except one and he is grown and works away from the house. My husband has been dead for nearly fifteen years, and I am getting old. Will you please send me some reading matter and scraps for patchwork, and anything to pass away the lonely hours; for I am alone almost

every day with no one to speak to from early morning until dark. A small Bible with good print would be greatly appreciated, as I am past seventy years and like to read the word of God. Will some sister please write to me? Will try to answer all letters. Address Mrs. Elizabeth Thomas, Polkton, North Carolina.

MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

THE TEASING BROTHER.

Scene IV.

THOMAS, JANE. *Afterward* EDWARD.

The yard. Thomas and Jane sitting together on the platform near the door of the house.

Thomas. I do not see why the boys could not wait till Edward came back with the vessel.

Jane. Why, they said it was time for them to go home; and it is time for me to go too.

Thomas. Wait a minute or two till Edward comes back. I want to see if Lucilla has mended my sail. I'll bet you she has not.

Jane. And I'll bet you that she has. She would like to mend your sails, and do every thing else for you that she could, if you would only be kind to her; and, for my part, I don't see why you can't be kind to her.

Thomas. Why, I am kind to her.

Jane. Well, if you are kind, you are not polite. I'm sure you are not polite. You are very impolite.

Thomas. Ah! here comes Edward. He has got the vessel.

Jane. Yes, and it is all nicely mended.

Enter EDWARD, with the vessel.

Edward. There, Thomas, there is your vessel.

Thomas. Did Lucilla mend the sail?

Edward. Yes, and she has mended it very nicely. It is as good as ever it was.

Thomas. Well, she did not mend it for me. She only mended it because you asked her.

Edward. What makes you think so?

Thomas. Because she is always perfectly willing to do any thing for you.

Edward. And what do you suppose is the reason why she is more willing to do things for me than for you?

Thomas. I don't know. She takes a notion to.

Edward. Well, however that may be, you are mistaken about it in this case, for she did not do it because I asked her to do it. She did it wholly of her own accord. As

soon as I went to her, she offered to do it of her own accord.

Thomas. Did she?

Edward. Yes. And now, how old are you, Thomas?

Thomas (*proudly*). I am over twelve.

Edward. Over twelve! Now stand up and let me see how tall you are.

Thomas (*standing up in a very erect posture*). See!

Edward. Yes, I see; yes. You can't be less than four feet two inches high.

Thomas. I mean to measure myself.

Edward. Yes, I should like to know how tall you are. The fact is, I expect two or three of my college classmates here in a few days, and I should like to show you to them as a curiosity.

Thomas. How as a curiosity?

Edward. Why, I think they will consider it as a great curiosity to see a boy over twelve years old, and over four feet high, who has yet got littleness enough left in him to take pleasure in teasing a girl.

Thomas. Oh Edward!

Edward. They would consider you a curiosity, I'm sure. If you were a little child, just playing about your mother's knee, they would not consider it surprising. In that case, you might as well get angry with a girl as with any other child.

Thomas. Why, Cousin Edward, I was not angry with her.

Edward. You were not angry with her? It grows worse and worse. Sometimes, when people do or say unkind things, they say, I did it hastily; I was angry; the moment I thought of it, I was sorry. But you, it seems, have not even that poor excuse. You do such things in cool moments, purely out of the pleasure it gives you to see a girl suffer. That's simple malice. It is a great deal worse than I thought it was. It is malice.

Thomas. Oh, Cousin Edward, what a hard name you give it!

Edward. That's the real name for it. Taking pleasure in giving other people pain is malice, and nothing else.

* Thomas. Why, Cousin Edward, I did not know she cared about it so much. I only did it in fun.

Edward. But you knew that it pained her. You knew that it made her unhappy, and that was what the fun of it consisted in. Now I suppose my classmates have seen ugly boys before, who can take pleasure in making animals and other boys unhappy—there are plenty of such fellows about; but that any well-grown boy, twelve years old and four feet high, could find any fun in tor-

menting a beautiful girl, and she his sister, I think will surprise them.

Thomas. No, I won't have you show me to them.

Edward. It is certainly a very extraordinary case. I never knew such childishness last so long before. I thought, when a boy got to be ten or twelve, he usually began to be something of a gentleman, or, at least, he began to have some of the feelings of a gentleman.

Thomas. Why, Cousin Edward, I only did it for fun.

Edward. That's just the thing—that you could find any fun in such a way. I came very near making a terrible mistake.

Thomas. What mistake?

Edward. Why, we had a plan of a party of young ladies and young gentlemen to make an excursion up the mountains, and we had your name down on the list to go with us. Some of them thought you were not old enough, but I thought you were, because you can drive so well. You see, we shall have to go five or six miles in chaises or wagons, and I thought you could drive one of the chaises so well. But I suppose that if you were to go with us, instead of helping us make the girls have a good time—which is the way in which we should try to find pleasure in the party—you would expect to find fun in teasing and tormenting them.

Thomas. Oh no, I should not, Edward.

Edward. For instance, you might get a handful of nettles, and come up behind some of them slyly, and put the nettles down in their necks.

Thomas. No, indeed, Edward, I should not do any such thing.

Edward. Or else, if we came to a steep place in going up the mountain, and we were all taking pleasure in helping our ladies up, and making it as easy as possible for them, you would find it good fun to push them back, and so make them have all the toil over again.

Thomas. Oh no, Edward.

Edward. Or lead some girl treacherously away to a shelf of the rock, where she could not get up or down.

Thomas. Indeed I would not do any such thing.

Edward. And then leave her there, and point at her, and laugh at her, for the sake of making fun.

Thomas. No, Edward, I should not do any such things as those. But I don't wonder that you should think I should, and I am determined that from this time forever—or at least as long as I live—I will never tease or trouble Lucilla any more.

Edward. That's a good resolution; but boys like you make a great many excellent resolutions that they never keep. I hope you will keep this one, but I can't help having some doubts about it. But good-by. I must go and make the arrangements for our party. [*Edward goes away.*]

Jane (coming up to Thomas compassionately). Don't be troubled, Thomas. I'm sorry he scolded you so much, and I'm sure that Lucilla will be sorry too.

Thomas. I don't think she ought to be sorry, for I really think that I deserve the scolding—I do, really and truly.

Jane. Then I think you had better go and find her in the garden, and tell her that you are sorry that you made her cry.

[*Jane goes out, leaving Thomas looking very thoughtful.*]

—*Orkney the Peacemaker, by Jacob Abbott.*

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

THE BRITISH N. P. S.

The British N. P. S. One wonders how many folks—even those interested in certain birds—can say offhand what these initials stand for. Certainly they are seen seldom, and very seldom, in the world of print, and are found for the most in use by that particular Service itself. Yet, though it is not heard of once in a blue moon, it is doing invaluable work in the great hostilities. By means of it not only human lives have been saved, but it is one of the invaluable means of the offensive and defensive against the underwater craft of the enemy.

The British Naval Pigeon Service is not new. It is as old as the times of galleys and bows and arrows, and was also the sole means of distant communication in the days of masts and yards and pig-tails. Thus the medium that served for sending information in mediæval days when only certain English ports provided the naval forces of England, still serves the same purpose to-day, when the British Navy is an Empire force girdling the world seas, and wireless telegraphy has harnessed the air.

Perhaps no living creature is more carefully preserved in Britain at the present time than the carrier and the homer pigeon. Thrilling stories creep out from time to time of the splendid work done by their wonderful pluck and determination. On shore they are trained and looked after by the N. P. S.; the men of which have had handling or training and racing pigeons before entering

this Service. Then the birds are despatched as required to the various naval bases or sub-bases for use along the coast by the watchers, and the patrolling and other craft.

A coast-watcher on one of the loneliest parts of the west coast of Britain may realize the worth of the N. P. S. better than most folks, for it brought about the capture of a crew of Germans. For nights together he had kept a sharp lookout along his beat for the U-boats possibly making the land to get the petrol, so cunningly stored away somewhere up his short stretch of coast. Day and night his vigilant eyes, jammed against his binoculars, swept the lonely waters. Again and again he searched all likely and unlikely places for the store of essence. But in vain. Then, one evening, just after sundown, he saw the tip of a periscope rise far out at sea, and then the conning-tower of a U-boat showed awash. The underwater craft became stationary. Specks representing men appeared on her conning-tower, confident of safety, for the nearest British base was far distant and the patrols here were few.

But the watcher turned to the light basket he was carrying on his back, and the little note he wrote hurriedly he tied to a leg of the pigeon. Then he released the "homer." For less than a minute the bird cast about, as if finding its bearings, then winged quickly away toward the naval sub-base, its home.

Sooner than the sun rose next morning, that U-boat was lying moored hard by British destroyers, and her crew were prisoners. She had run out of petrol, but not this time was the hidden cache emptied. The winged member of the N. P. S. had stopped that enterprise.

Another instance is that ensuing when one of the British patrol boats, early one morning, was attacked by a German submarine. The vessel was torpedoed and began to sink quickly. The skipper, however, had time to write a brief message, roll up the scrap of paper, and secure it to a leg of the pigeon, before the shattered craft sank under his feet. Just in time he threw the carrier pigeon up into the air, for within the next minute he was struggling in the water, and striking out for dear life toward a bit of wreckage. By now the U-boat had risen to the surface, and her men were watching the patrolmen struggling in the water. The pigeon they espied, and immediately began to shoot at it. The skipper saw the bird badly hit, and gave up all hopes of rescue.

He did not know how plucky the N. P. S. is, how stanch the spirit of a trained "carrier."

Some twenty miles away it lighted on the deck of a patrolling destroyer, its silvery gray plumage specked with blood, one of its wings wounded, and some feathers of the tail completely shot away. Quickly it was brought to the commanding officer, who took the message off its leg. Three minutes later the destroyer was rushing at full speed to the succor, and her wireless telegraphist was ringing the sky with news of the enemy's whereabouts. In less than three-quarters of an hour the patrolmen were safe on board. The N. P. S. had saved their lives and brought together the avenging destroyers for the hunting. The "carrier" recovered from its wounds and resumed its place on the active list.

Many are the praiseworthy deeds performed by the birds of the British Naval Pigeon Service, which if achieved by human individuals would be acknowledged by some Distinguished Conduct Medal or other decoration and laudation in public print. Only the register of the Naval Pigeon Service could tell fully, but in curt, laconic, and brief sentences, the record of each bird and its good work done against the Germans.—*Our Dumb Animals.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

RED SNOW.

(Continued from last number.)

"All good things come from Heaven, that is, from the God of Heaven," answered the stranger. "But this is as much a plant as the Alpine rose by your side. It did not drop down from the sky, but grows in the very snow itself, and covers over miles and miles of the hill you thought so desolate. God sends good things everywhere, though not everywhere alike."

Oh, the joy of such a doctrine! The simplest child could understand it, and be glad! All was explained now, too; the rosy patch and the broad tracts of colour were both accounted for, and Siegfried was as happy as he now believed the mountain to be. And, embracing his new friend, he forthwith began such a blundering account of what he, and his mother, and the farmer's boy, had thought about the rosy patch, that the stranger could do nothing but laugh, and at last stopped him by exclaiming, "Then you see you were all wrong; but never mind. Take me to your mother's cottage, and we will tell her all about it, too, and I will show it to you both, for even you have not really seen it yet."

Siegfried's mother welcomed the friendly

stranger whom her son brought to her door with all the heartiness of a Swiss welcome; and not the less when she found he was an English traveller, on his way to a neighbouring town to visit a well-known officer there, who had been deprived of a limb in the same action in which Siegfried's father had lost his life.

And as the town was but a few miles off, and the summer evenings so long, the stranger was easily persuaded to rest for a few hours in the Swiss cottage, and tell the widow and her son the history of his adventures on Mont Blanc, and of the red snow plant he had brought from it. Not that telling its history only would have been enough; nor was there anything either beautiful or wonderful-looking in the red, jelly-like mass in the tin box, when looked at only with the naked eye. The stranger had far more in store for them than that.

"I am going to show you," he began, at last, and after busying himself in unpacking that revealer of secrets, a microscope,— "that God has sent many more gracious things into the world than people commonly think; because so many more than our natural eyes are able to see. Do you like to know this, little Siegfried?" he added, turning purposely to the child.

Siegfried nodded his heartiest nod of assent, and the widow said, with a smile, "You should have asked that question, Sir, of me. It is I who have not believed, because I did not see. He has had an instinct of the truth all along."

"Well then, good Mother," replied the stranger, "you shall see and believe what will, I think, comfort you for life—namely, that God makes the very wilderness to burst forth and blossom like a rose: that there are no outcast ends of the earth, uncared for by Him; no desolate corners where His goodness is not shown forth."

As he spoke he finished the last adjustment of the microscope, and touching the red jelly in the tin box with the fine point of a porcupine's quill, he placed the tiny morsel so obtained in a glass, to be looked at, and called to Siegfried to have the first peep.

The widow, struck as she had been with the stranger's words, had her own doubts as to what there could be to be seen, for she had not been able to detect anything on the porcupine's quill, but she said nothing, and very soon Siegfried's shouts of delight announced that *something*, at any rate, was there.

And, truly, what there was, was a very pretty sight. Four or five bright little red balls, and two or three colourless ones among

them, were lying like gems in the few drops of water which had been put in to keep them separate.

The child believed at once, but at the first moment the mother could scarcely credit what she saw. That this should be a bit of the shapeless stuff she had looked at in the tin box—it was marvellous indeed.

The stranger now proceeded to explain. He told them that each of the red balls was a perfect plant in itself. That it was a little colourless bag, finer than gold-beater's skin, filled with a red substance, which shone through. That, as soon as it was full grown, the red substance within divided into four, eight, and sometimes sixteen separate red balls, of course of the tiniest size possible, all which immediately began to grow very fast, and grew, and grew, and grew, till the little bag in which they lived could hold them no longer, but burst, and dropt them out.

"These," said he, "are the young plants; and when each of *them* is full grown, the same thing happens again. The red substance in each divides into other tiny balls, and, as these grow, they burst out from the parent bag, (called a *cell*, properly,) and begin life for themselves. And thus comes another generation of the ball-like plants, and so another and another; and all this so quickly, that, in a few hours, millions of them have sprung from a few single cells. So now, little Siegfried, you know why, when you looked the second time at the rosy patch, it had spread into those great broad tracts of colour which, in fact, covered over miles of the poor snow with its beauty. It was no wonder, was it?"

No, that was no wonder; but that such things were, of which so many people did not know, was a wonder from which the good widow could not easily recover. Besides, she was thinking of the pastor having made such a mistake.

As for Siegfried, he had not lived long enough to know why he should be so much surprised about the red snow plant; was it a bit more really strange than the growth of the Alpine rose, which astonished nobody? So his chief feeling was extreme delight at there being something on the mountain to make amends for its want of flowers.

"And now," said the stranger, "is there anything more you would like to ask?"

The mother was about to speak at once, but hesitated and drew back. She knew so little; she feared to seem so ignorant and foolish.

Reassured, however, she begged to be told how the marvellous plant could live amidst nothing but snow; could come up, and bring

forth a thousand fold, with nothing to nourish and support it?

The stranger repeated the word "*nothing*" with a smile.

"Nothing, because we see nothing!"

"Ah, see what a bad habit is!" cried the mother. "I had forgotten already. Then you think there may be things I do not know of, in what we call the cold, barren snow?"

"Ay, ay," was the answer; "germs of life, hidden and buried, perhaps, for years; seeds scattered no one can tell how or when; and salts and chemical properties, needing only some accident of a sunbeam, or dew, or state of the very air, to make all work together, and the frozen surface to become moist, and the red snow plant to spring up by millions."

Here he paused, and seeing little Siegfried looking wistfully at him, as if trying to understand, he took him on his knee caressingly, and said, "That microscope is a very curious thing, is it not?"

The child nodded his "yes" as heartily as ever, and then laid his head, contentedly, on his friend's shoulder, while he went on talking.

"Yes; it is very curious, for it shows us quantities of things we could not see without it; but the best lesson it teaches is, how much more there may be of which, even with its help, we can see and know nothing; for, although there is a limit to our power of seeing God's works, no naturalist dares to think he has reached the limits of the works themselves. In this life we cannot hope to know a hundredth part of the creations which surround us. You can believe this now, good Mother?"

"With all my heart," was her answer.

"And, further," he added, "you can judge now for yourself, that even of the things we do what we call see with the naked eye, there are a great many of which we can never know anything like the real truth, without such aid as this (pointing to the microscope). What was the red snow plant to you at first? A piece of shapeless jelly. What did it become to your more enlightened eye? A living organism, unmistakably from Almighty hands, endowed with a system of life, if not of life-enjoyment, peculiarly its own. This is something to have discovered, certainly, but is it all? Ah! as I tell it, I feel how imperfect the account is—how much remains behind. All we have done is but to have made a step or two out of complete ignorance.

"The rest remaineth unrevealed."

Yet a glory comes into our hearts from the thought of the worlds beyond reach of our present senses, like the reflection from light-

ning below our own horizon, and both faith and hope ought to be strengthened."

The widow did not speak.

"I have one word more to say," continued the stranger guest, "if you will allow me to say it, and can forgive the old traveller for preaching as well as teaching. I have taught you something of God's doings in the natural world, which has given you comfort and hope. What, then, you believe of His works, believe also of His mercies. If you cannot find a limit to the one, suspect and hope that the other, too, may be infinite—far beyond our comprehension. Will you try and take this last lesson to heart?"

The poor mother's eyes filled with tears. She had passed tremblingly through life, and sadly needed the good counsel.

After a short pause, her counsellor went on, firmly, but very kindly—

"You have seen how weak and short-sighted the natural eye is; can you for a moment suppose that the spiritual eye is more far-seeing and better able to acquaint you with God's purposes and doings? Are His works to be infinite, and His mercies bounded, so that a man can point to the limit, and say, Here God's mercy ceases; here there is no hope—but only *everlasting lifelessness and despair*? Oh, good Mother, to whom is entrusted the rearing of a very tender plant, take heed what you teach, and foster in it, above all other virtues, the charity which 'hopeth all things,' and then can both believe and endure."

The lesson was not spoken in vain even then, and it was never forgotten. And Siegfried grew on, and the stranger revisited the cottage many times, and by-and-by aided in the education of the child whose acquaintance he had made in so singular a manner. And, after many years, the young man, Siegfried, became a teacher himself—a pastor—though not in his own country.

But never, through a long life, did he forget his early hopes, and fears, and fancies, about the desolate mountain, nor the lesson he learnt from the stranger traveller. And into whatever scenes of darkness and ignorance he forced his way; whatever he met with of sin and sorrow; however often baffled, thrown back, and disappointed, he never despaired; for he used to recall the past, and take comfort to himself by thinking, "It may be God's will yet, that the red snow plant may one day burst into life on the cold hill-side."—*From "Parables from Nature," by Mrs. Gatty.*

Charity—seeketh not her own.—1 Cor. xiii. 5.

FRIENDSHIP WITH A BIRD.

I have had one little, brief friendship with a bird during the present summer, which seems like a tender dream, a fleeting glimpse into an unknown world, a peep into fairy-land, to me.

On one summer morning, which had succeeded one of those coolish nights which come a little sharply after a season of heat, I stepped out into the old-fashioned garden which lies just beyond my apple-tree. A group of crimson petunias was held up by a little dry shrub to keep them from trailing their silk dresses on the ground below, and there, perched on one of its bare twigs, a little bunch of greeny-gold feathers, sat a young humming-bird. I softly came nearer and nearer, expecting every moment that he would fly away; but the little thing seemed chilled or sleepy, and I at last took him in my hand. He did not seem to flutter, but gasped a little, and I thought him dying. I kept him in my warm hand, and sending for a lump of loaf sugar and a tiny glass of water, I took him indoors. I patiently held him in one hand, warming him, while with the little finger of my right hand I held a drop of the sweetened water to his bill for some minutes, and was finally rewarded by the little bill opening and the wiry little tongue sipping the sweet from my finger, running about under the nail of it, as if it were a flower. He soon grew lively, flew around the room, and perched on some flowers on my dresser. Then he took longer flight, and grew so tame that when he was hungry he would fly down to me from top of a picture or mirror frame, and alight on a little twig which I would hold out, where he would sit and sip his sugar and water from a teaspoon or the end of my finger. I gave him the range of two rooms, and, having no cage, I fastened a spray of fuchsias by my window, where he slept at night, with the tiny head under the wing, never moving until his dawn came, when he became uneasy until he had his sip of sugar and water.

What completely won my heart was the fearless confidence of the little thing.

I did not have him long; indeed, how could I rob him of the outdoor, happy August days, which were passing so rapidly out of his brief life; so I said to myself every morning, while I surrounded his window with fresh flowers, and still kept the glass closed between him and freedom. But the little thing awakened an almost human love in the heart with his own trusting confidence and his rare gem-like beauty.

Finally, on one evening when he seemed settled on his twig for the night, I opened an

outside door to the room for a brief moment, and just as I was closing it again there came a little whirl over my head, a dash of golden green, and he was gone.

That night it blew and rained. I could not sleep, for it seemed to me there was a tenders baby out in the chilly rain. But I have seen many humming-birds since then, still flying about the petunias and late summer roses, so we will trust that my little pet was soon sheltered and companioned among his own relations, and ready to start with them on their long aerial journey southward. But to me he was like a visitant from fairy-land.—*Vick's Magazine*.

WHAT DO THE BIRDS SING?

"Zee—zee—zee—ee" is the song of many of the warblers. The black-throated green warbler is said to sing "Cheese, Cheese, a Little More Cheese!" and as you listen to the song you can catch something about cheese in it! Bradford Torrey interprets the same song as "Trees, trees, murmuring trees!" so you see, we do not all think alike.

It is interesting indeed to take the different interpretations and attempt to hear the wording for ourselves. One summer, not long since, I was visiting an uncle in lower New Hampshire. We heard a towhee sing his beautiful little melody, which causes him to be called chewink. That was not disputed; he certainly did say "chewink" very plainly indeed. But when we came to interpret his other, and longer, song, we certainly had an argument. I declared that he distinctly said, "Where's your bre-e-e-e-eze?" while my father declared with emphasis that he very plainly declared that it was time to "pick your peas!" After we had talked for some time a friend told us that the common interpretation around any section where country dances were held was, "Dick, you fiddle-iddle-iddle."

That bright golden summer spot, the gold finch, is one of the most cheerful of our feathered friends, and yet no two people can agree upon what he sings. "Hear me hear me, dearie?" is one way his song is put to words, while another is, "So here we go so here we go!" Never mind, I always have my own idea of what he says, and I think that anybody ought to hear the same words in his song. They are "Cheery, now, be cheery," and his whole attitude reflects cheerfulness. But I suppose that you will have your own way of wording that song, and you have a perfect right to do so; that's half the fun in bird work!

There are many of our common birds that will fully repay you for the time you spend in listening to them. The earliest is the song sparrow and Thoreau expressed the song as: "Maids, maids, maids! Hang on your teakettle-ettle-ettle!" Then there is the bluebird who sighs with happiness as he announces that spring is at his heels and exclaims: "Dear, dear! Think of it, think of it!" The disgusted flicker, as he turns from some capering smaller creature, exclaims: "Wit? What wit! What wit! What wit!" The Baltimore oriole has evidently been having a hard time persuading his mate to do something he has been urgently seeking. Finally she assents and he exclaims: "Will you? Will you really, really, truly?" and she answers, "I will."

The tanager is impatient; or perhaps he thinks his mate is, for he says: "Pshaw! Wait, wait, wait for me. Wait!" And so we may find in bird life the same kind of talk that we human beings hear amongst ourselves. One of the greatest pleasures is to spend a portion of each day in listening to those songs about you and interpreting them. You will note that there are many ventriloquists in the trees; that the songs of different individuals vary; that you can fit one interpretation to one singer and not to his neighbor of the same color; that there are a thousand and one things in bird songs and calls that you never noticed before, although you had heard them over and over again. It is lots of fun; just try it and see!

Four-Footed Friends.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A. Jenks, 45 Spring Lane, Canton, Mass. Contributors are requested to write on one side of the paper only. Write name and address plainly (not necessarily for publication) and send the answers to the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

LITERARY CONTEST.

(Fill the blank spaces with the titles of popular books)

In the village of W— was the famous prison H— O— M— L— which contain several prisoners. Among them was H— E—, arrested in connection with T— L— C—. T— D— of the prisoner was granted by the L— G— upon the petition of the D— A—.

II.

BEHEADED RHYMES.

The farmer raises fields of
The poor are oft in need of . . .
I'd like a tart or cake to . . .

These colors were not made to . . .
How seldom we refuse to . . .
Here's Chapter XX. and the . . .

The artist has unusual
The eager hunter aims, to . . .
You look so pale—have you been . . .?

Selected.

III.

PECULIAR ARITHMETIC.

To one-sixth of Boston add one-fourth of Ohio, one-fourth of Erie, one-sixth of Madrid, one-sixth of Dedham, one-sixth of London, one-fifth of Paris, one-fourth of Bath, one-sixth of France, one-sixth of Newark, one-sixth of Newton, one-fourth of York, one-seventh of Laconia, one-fourth of Iowa, two-sevenths of Lebanon and make the object of the big drive during April.

IV.

CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.

1. Interrupted Ploughing.
2. Conceited Senator.
3. Ever Alert.
4. Glorifies Adventurous Heroes.
5. Great Philanthropist.

Answers to puzzles in the April number.

I. METAMORPHOSES: 1. Tack, talk, tall, tail, nail. 2. Tear, bear, bead, bend, mend. 3. Mean, bean, bead, bend, bind, kind. 4. Bait, bast, fast, fist, fish. 5. Bird, bind, wind, wine, mine, mile, mole. 6. Land, lane, lake. 7. Hate, late, lake, like. 8. Rise, wise, wife, fife, file, fill, fall.

II. INITIAL LETTER PUZZLE: Patriots' Day.

III. HALF-SQUARE: SPAIN
PAIN
AIR
IN
N

IV. DIAMOND: C
THE
CHILI
ELK
I

V. GREEK AND ROMAN MYTHOLOGY: 1. Agamemnon. 2. Bacchus. 3. Clio. 4. Jupiter. 5. Minerva. 6. Parthenope. 7. Vulcan.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

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1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

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